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Be like Oppenheimer: Donate your weapons information for the next generation of LANL researchers

By Andrew Gordon, Weapons Librarian, [National Security Research Center](#)

You can follow the Lab's first physicists, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Richard Feynman, Hans Bethe, and so many others through the years, plus know your information is helping future researchers — just like our first scientists did for you.

How? Donate your physical or digital classified weapons records to the Lab's National Security Research Center (NSRC), said Riz Ali, NSRC Director.

The NSRC houses 80 years' worth of one-of-kind records, which total in the millions and include nearly every medium imaginable. It is the Laboratory's largest collection of research materials and the largest classified library of any Department of Energy lab.

It all started with Oppenheimer, our first Lab director, and his Technical Library that was established during the Manhattan Project, which was the U.S. government's top-secret effort to create the first atomic bombs to help end World War II.

"Few NSRC patrons are aware that most of its vital materials come from the Lab's own workforce," said Chris C'de Baca, the NSRC's Group Leader. "A significant portion of our critical material — which today's researchers access regularly — is a direct contribution from research scientists. If people don't contribute, then we won't have the information we need when people come to the NSRC for research."

Why should I make an information donation?

Both the physical and digital materials are the result of decades of preservation by librarians, archivists, historians and information specialists.

Tens of thousands of documents in the Online Vault and PDMLink, the Lab's two largest classified search engines, are submitted by researchers so that others can find and reference them for their work. However, important pieces of information are not always submitted to the NSRC and are at risk of being lost over time, especially as researchers retire, C'de Baca said.

What's being contributed to the Lab's classified library?

One example of these critical contributions is a small collection of classified reports by Mound Laboratories, a now-closed nuclear weapons research facility in Ohio. The NSRC recently acquired the reports thanks to a Lab staff member.

"One of my external collaborators at another laboratory had gone through significant efforts to recover some reports on work that had been done at Mound back in the day," said Becky Chamberlin, who works in Systems Design and Analysis (NEN-5), which is a part of the Associate Laboratory Directorate for Global Security. "I had looked for this information in our own collections unsuccessfully, and realized I could fill this gap for some future LANL researcher by contributing them to the NSRC."

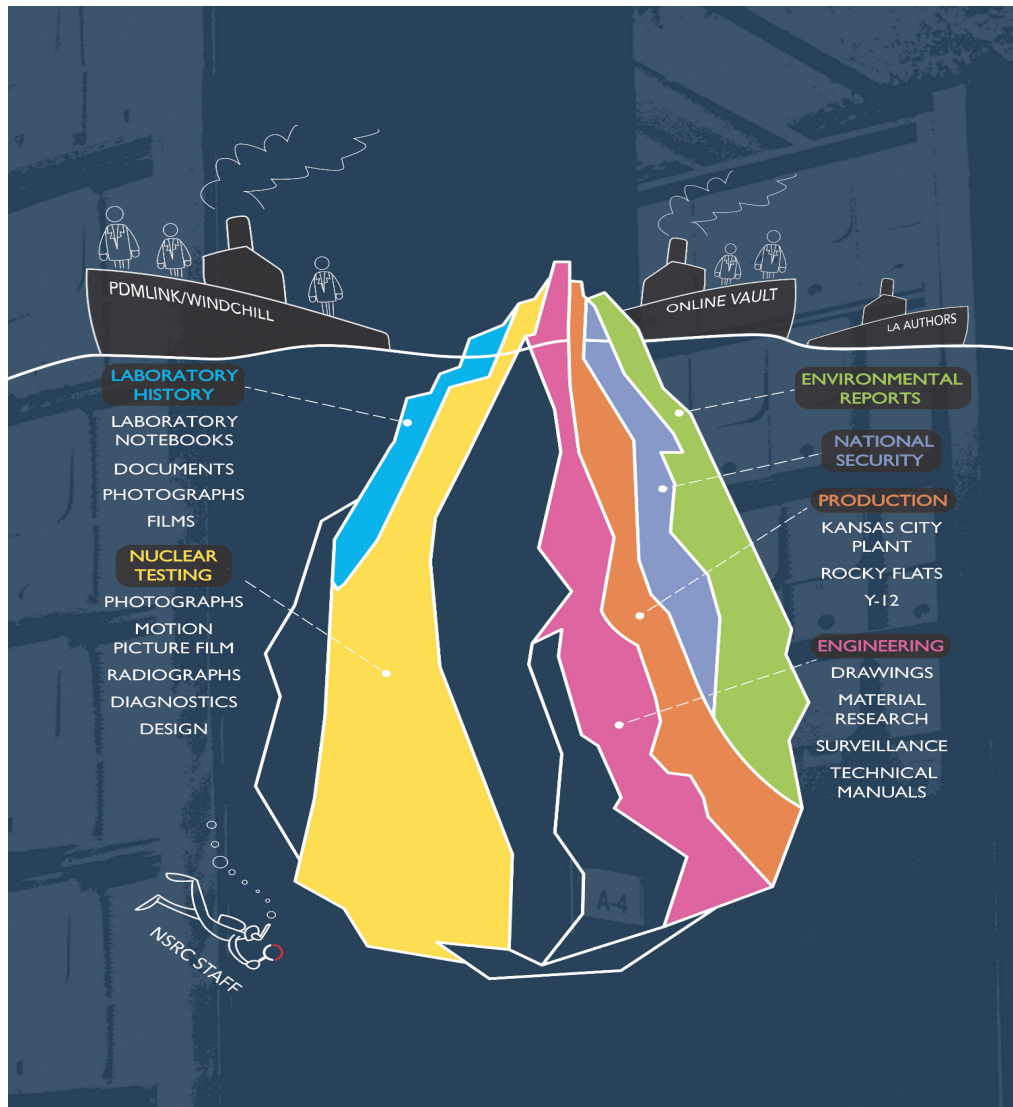
The NSRC has received many other important items over the years, such as engineering drawings, research notes, and compendiums created by top LANL scientists, all of which are accessed regularly today, Ali said.

How can I make an information donation?

“Anyone who creates or maintains research or documentation can contribute classified documents to the NSRC,” Ali said. “Your contribution may benefit other researchers at LANL.”

Send an unclassified email to nsrc-research@lanl.gov and NSRC librarians and archivists can work with you to securely integrate your materials into our classified collections.

Visuals:



https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EliOsLxuYrZL_YGMMiC_n4bPF62g7gav/view?usp=sharing

Caption: What's in the National Security Research Center's collections? A lot! The NSRC and the Lab's researchers rely on the millions of materials in these collections to support today's national security work. A majority of the records come from the researchers themselves.



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SzqF9pHDm8xRsNwSef-8cDU7xNJFsEAP/view?usp=sharing>

Caption: The Lab's National Security Research Center (NSRC) librarians and archivists work with LANL researchers to securely integrate materials into the classified collections. Physical and digital records donations provide vital information for today's and future scientists and engineers.